

This long-simmering crisis is largely Mr. Aristide's making. . . . We urge him to examine his position carefully, to accept responsibility, and to act in the best interests of the people of Haiti.

The administration's initial lack of attention and subsequent response left us with no policy levers to pull and no Haitian institutions to call upon to quell the crisis. In that situation—faced with violence and instability that threatened to lead to a refugee crisis—we deployed American Marines.

Emerging crises in the rest of the hemisphere are potentially as dire, but the administration still appears no more engaged.

Take, for example, Venezuela. Political turmoil and mismanagement have had a serious and adverse impact on economic growth in that country. In 2003, real GDP shrank by nearly 10 percent—after contracting 9 percent the year before—and inflation was the region's highest at 27.1 percent. All of this in a country that has the largest oil reserves outside the Middle East—providing the United States 14 percent of its oil—and increasingly sizable natural gas stores.

Moreover, slow economic growth may be the least of Venezuela's problems. The country is caught in a political crisis over a recall referendum that could bring the Chavez government to an abrupt end.

The situation was exacerbated by clear missteps on the part of the administration in April of 2002, when the administration overturned decades of American policy in the hemisphere by seeming to endorse, however briefly, an unconstitutional change of government. Former President Carter has done us proud by stepping in to pick up the pieces in order to ensure that the problems of this democracy can be resolved democratically.

But with deepening polarization and new developments in Venezuela each day, there is no substitute for official American leadership in pushing for the respect of democratic institutions over personalities and power.

As in Haiti, if we wait for others to take the lead in Venezuela, we will have waited too long.

There are other emerging threats to stability and democracy in the region—from Peru to Bolivia to Argentina. Economic growth is down, poverty and drug trafficking are increasing, and corruption is rampant.

Perhaps most alarming are observations from recent public surveys that anti-Americanism is approaching all-time highs while respect for democracy is reaching an all-time low.

Such a precarious time demands engagement and leadership from America. Instead, the administration has decided to limit American investments in the region this year, arguing, as I noted, that we have other priorities.

As one leading expert pointed out:

Relations between the United States and Latin America have acquired a rawness and a level of indecorum that recall previous eras of inter-America strain and discord.

It is not too late, and I hope the meeting tomorrow in Texas marks the administration's renewed interest in the hemisphere. If it does, we are prepared to work with the President and our friends in Mexico and in Argentina and in Venezuela and in Peru and in Bolivia, and in Colombia to build the institutions needed for peace, prosperity, and stability.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SUNUNU). The clerk will call the roll.

Mr. REID. Will the Senator withhold?

Mr. DASCHLE. I will.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant minority leader.

#### ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, on our side, we have requests for 15 minutes and 20 minutes for morning business. I checked with the majority. There would be no objections so long as they have equal time. So I ask unanimous consent that both sides have 35 minutes for morning business this morning.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, on the minority side, we yield 20 minutes to the Senator from Connecticut, Mr. LIEBERMAN; and then, following that, 15 minutes to the Senator from Iowa, Mr. HARKIN.

#### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business with 35 minutes for each side equally divided, the first half of the time under the control of the Democratic leader or his designee, the second half of the time under the control of the majority leader or his designee.

Under the request of the assistant minority leader, the Senator from Connecticut is recognized.

#### REFLECTIONS FROM CAMPAIGN EXPERIENCE

Mr. LIEBERMAN. I thank my friend and colleague from Nevada.

Mr. President, it is now more than a month since I ended my quest for the Democratic nomination for President. It was a thrilling, demanding, purposive journey across this great country. I am deeply grateful for the opportunity I had. I learned a lot. In fact, I would recommend anyone who has the opportunity try it at least once in a lifetime. But today I want to share

with my colleagues a few serious reflections from my campaign experience about the current state of our politics and the way they may affect our work here in this election year on the great questions of our economy and our security, particularly in Iraq.

It is now clear who the Presidential nominees of the major parties will be: President Bush and Senator KERRY. Therefore, it is time for members of both parties to start thinking and talking about how we want the national campaign to be conducted at this uniquely difficult and dangerous moment in American history.

For the United States, this is a very good time, but it is also a very difficult time. We have the largest economy and the strongest military in the world. Our core values of freedom and opportunity are ascendent around the globe. In so many ways here at home we live better than any people ever have because of the truly amazing advances in medical science, telecommunications, information technology, and transportation. However, these advances and the globalization they have facilitated have also brought painful changes for millions of Americans in lost jobs, declining income, skyrocketing health care costs, and a fear of what the future may bring.

On top of that, we face an unprecedented new challenge to our security and our freedom from fanatical Islamic terrorists who brutally attacked us and our homeland on September 11, 2001.

These two new realities have made the American people more anxious about their future, than I have ever seen them before. Our confidence and our optimism must be restored. How best to do that and who can best do that is ultimately what this year's Presidential campaign is all about. Ideally, the campaign will raise our hopes, not deepen our insecurities; it will unite us, not divide us; it will strengthen us, not weaken us; it will create an environment in which our Government, including this Congress, will produce relief for some of what ails America, hopefully this year. But I can't say I am optimistic that any of these ideals will be achieved because of the rigid and reflexive partisanship that has come to dominate so much of our politics.

Warnings about factionalism are, of course, as old as our Republic, but they seem especially relevant and necessary today, when strategists from both major parties seem poised to seek electoral victory by inflaming their inner constituencies with ideological tinder and brutal personal attacks on the other party's candidates. That will only divide us more deeply and make it more difficult for us to overcome the enormous threats to our security and our prosperity.

Our political parties and Presidential candidates must find ways to differ without being destructive, to debate